



Sinan C. Savaşkan
THE SLEEP OF REASON
Music for solo flute & electronics



NOEMI GYORI
Flûte

Sonata for Flute and Electronics

'... una rilettura indipendente' (2023–24)

1.	I.	Processional	1:59
2.		Interlude/Transition I	1:25
3.		Interlude/Transition II	1:27
4.	II.	Veloce, con rigore, come una cadenza (flute solo)	1:54
5.	III.	Veloce, affrettato!	2:30
6.	IV.	"The profound lecture, remembered ..." (flute solo)	1:19
7.	V.	"Extremely sensitive, but without a trace of sentimentality"	4:13
8.	VI.	À Giacometti: Somewhat aloof, "... bronze, thin man, passing through ..."	2:33
9.	VII.	Nostalgicamente al fine	3:54

The Sleep of Reason (2005–23)

for solo flute

10.	Ritornello A	2:08
11.	Episode I	1:43
12.	Ritornello B	0:28
13.	Episode II	2:25
14.	Ritornello C	0:49
15.	Episode III	2:07
16.	Ritornello D	4:09

17.	Always at Dusk, No.3 (2024)	7:05
	for alto flute and electronics	

Pas de Deux for One (1978, rev. 2023)

for solo flute

18.	Movement I	3:35
19.	Movement II	2:24
20.	Movement III	4:53

Total Playing Time 53 :25

All works are premiere recordings

A NOTE FROM THE PERFORMER

It is challenging to convey how an instrument is perceived from the outside versus how it feels to play it. Growing up with the flute, I noticed people tended to associate it with brightness, lightness, and an almost naive gentleness – like a delicate shimmer, filled with elegance and birdsong. Yet from my earliest days with the instrument, it felt to me like it held a deep warmth, an intense, almost mystical darkness that resonated in ways I can only describe as profound. It was as if the flute had its own world, filled with subtleties and mysteries waiting to be discovered.

During my training, I was frequently encouraged to cultivate a brighter, lighter sound, and although I eventually mastered that technical brilliance, I always felt most connected to the flute's core warmth and depth, which defined my personal bond with the instrument. Even as I came to enjoy the flute's glowing clarity, my sense of its grounded resonance remained a constant, almost like a signature woven into my music-making.

The compositions of Sinan Savaşkan harmonise powerfully with this world I carry within me. Playing his works feels entirely natural, as if immersing myself in flowing lines that hold structure yet move with freedom. In his music, each note seems to evolve and transform, which I find incredibly liberating.

In an ideal setting, I'd wish for my listeners to spend an hour with this recording, perhaps in dimmed light or with closed eyes, letting themselves feel the shadowed ambience and enveloping richness of Savaşkan's music brought to life through the sound of the flute.

Noemi Gyori

PROGRAMME NOTES

Sonata ‘... una rilettura indipendente’ (2023–24) for flute and electronics

Two of the works on the present album are modules from my ongoing cycle *Many Stares through Semi-Nocturnal Zeiss-Blink* (begun in 1978, and projected eventually to contain 360 pieces). The pieces are numbered not according to their order of composition but rather are assigned numbers which refer in some way to important dates in their conception; the chosen number does not function in a mystical, esoteric ‘numerological’ manner but informs the angle from which the material is observed and compositionally manipulated. The Sonata ‘... una rilettura indipendente’ is module 74 of the cycle; Noemi Gyori and I met on 14 March 2024, the 74th day of that year, to work together on my initial drafts for this work and for *Always at Dusk, No.3* (module 133 of the cycle). Noemi’s enthusiasm and unique interpretive skills not only proved to be ideal for the sound-world I was trying to create, but encouraged me to expand even further the more virtuosic and dramatic elements of the Sonata in particular.

Like *Always at Dusk, No.3*, the Sonata has its generative origins in a melodic fragment – in this case one jotted down many years ago at a bus stop by Brockwell Park, London on the business card of a nearby florist. It has remained pinned to the lectern of my piano since, and has formed the motivic basis of endless improvisations, a piano sonata, and a suite of shorter instrumental pieces. In 2023, I discovered that certain elements of all these compositions – insignificant in their original contexts – had the right kind of intervallic content and bravura gesturality for yet another work. They quickly found their way into the large-scale flute work I had been constructing for a few weeks, which thus became a further re-reading of a ‘text’ which had already appeared in diverse (dis)guises. The material that was familiar to me, in this new and unfamiliar context took on a decidedly unfamiliar appearance – further enhanced by the expansion undertaken after the decisive meeting with Noemi.

Underlying the Sonata is a five-part chorale. Each strand (or ‘voice’) has a distinct character and role in the course of the work. Three of the strands form the harmonic basis of the whole work, in eleven cadential steps. The harmony employed is fully directional, and omnipresent from the first note of the work, A natural, from where it moves up in an arc to a high D sharp

before winding back down to the ‘chanting-tone’ A natural in the final bar. This perfect arc is also mirrored symmetrically, to form a descending-ascending line which provides the work’s bass motion. The apex of the work is the beginning of the fifth movement, where that high D sharp is mirrored by a contrabass E flat (enriched with four subharmonics, overtones and two summation/resultant tones).

The ‘chorale’ mentioned above is never used in its bare form. From the beginning of the compositional process, the melodic materials of the five strands of the music, through their voice-leading activities, suggested rhythmic characteristics, shapes, movements. Although the overall formal and harmonic direction remained as originally planned (albeit with at times huge, ‘inspired’ distortions to the length of the movements!), the work gradually became a narrative, sectional partita, in a certain early Baroque sense of that term.

This is a strange development in my work in that the final piece on this album, *Pas de Deux for One* (1978), was the last piece I had written in a ‘narrative’ manner. After writing that work, I discovered the music of Giacinto Scelsi, and devoted myself to discovering ways of sustaining full works with minimally changing textures and without descriptive, theatrical, ‘modernistic’ sensationalist gestures. Forty-plus years later, I now seem to be happy to produce narratives through music ... but possibly not the tastefully descriptive sort. In the kind of non-depictive narrative this piece presents, the listener is invited to be the third participant, alongside the composer and the performer, the latter of whom acts as the ‘focalizer’.

The Sonata is dedicated, with boundless gratitude, to Noemi Gyori.

The Sleep of Reason (2005–23)

for solo flute

One of the worst ways to travel from London to Leeds is on a coach from Victoria station. On the night of 7–8 July 2005, my journey started at 11.55pm and lasted a very uncomfortable six hours. The reason for the journey: I had promised to hear an ex-pupil in the finals of the Leeds Conductors Competition, whose semi-final was taking place on the afternoon of 8 July. And the reason for choosing the coach: all transport in and out of London had been suspended following the London terrorist bombings less than 24 hours before my departure. This was the first and only available vehicle leaving London that day, as the city was at a standstill.

A swirling, sinewy, somewhat sinister microtonal theme and its continuous, relentless transformation emerged early on in the journey, during a ‘threshold of sleep’ hypnagogic moment. Every time I closed my eyes for a minute or two, ‘the tune’, in its somewhat sinister way, returned, and it haunted me throughout the journey.

These musical ideas, and the related socio-political thoughts of those few days, triggered a certain early childhood memory. A book of fine art reproductions of Old Masters that we had at home had many fascinating scenes and images, but the one that stood out as the most mysterious and, probably, the gloomiest was ‘The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters’, the forty-third in Goya’s series of etchings *Los Caprichos*.

This series of satirical images – with their stunning originality and supreme technical refinement, at once humorous and macabre – made an unforgettable impression on me as a child. Over the intervening years since that time, I have discovered that the questions which they pose continue to puzzle and engage art critics to this day.

Los Caprichos, historically, is a pivotal work, standing as it does at the crossroads of two contrasting artistic outlooks. The eighteenth century, the ‘Age of Reason’, was dominated by Classicism, with its emphasis on a sense of order, proportion and restraint. The latter part of the century saw the rise of Romanticism, a wilder aesthetic approach in which the imagination of the artist came to the fore – and which came to dominate the arts in the nineteenth century. This latter approach, arguably, has never been abandoned.

Goya’s annotation for the plate that first captured my attention reads (in translation): “*Imagination abandoned by reason produces impossible monsters: united with her, she is the mother of all arts and the source of their wonders.*” The active debate, still, centres around the message of the image and Goya’s annotations: was Goya advocating Classical ‘sensibility’ in the practice of art, or was he hinting at the emerging Romantic notions, such as – some degree of madness is an unavoidable ingredient in creating real works of art?

The Sleep of Reason is dedicated to Alexander Shelley, who was declared winner of the eighth Leeds Conductors Competition on 9 July 2005.

Always at Dusk, No.3 (2024)

for alto flute and electronics

I have written around ten *Always at Dusk* pieces. They are all made by magnifying a remembered, significant moment's emotion into an extended duration, in the form of a piece of music. Mostly, they are based on melodic fragments that I made up in my early teenage years, used then as circular 'waiting games' – often at certain times of the day, and inevitably brought about by changes of seasons. In spite of all this, they do not deal with nostalgia, but something closer to what the Portuguese call *saudade* – that untranslatable word for that unexplainable emotion ...

Originally, these pieces, which I think of as *esquisses*, came about because I wanted to experiment with a kind of composing which allowed my musical materials to exist in a non-clock-time environment. The concept of duration (*durée* in the Bergsonian sense) is concerned with a period, or experience, or memory marked and measured by events, rather than a ticking clock and the way it numerically measures 'time'.

'Time' has always concerned me, as my friends and colleagues will testify; it is (or used to be) my favourite four-letter word. I have gradually come to terms with it by excluding it from my life/art, or art/life routine. 'Duration', I have come to believe, is the correct concept for measuring human experience. I find this to be especially true in creating work in the performance arts: it encourages free flow of ideas and positively influences the structuring of forms and proportions without constraints of so-called 'chronological time'.

Always at Dusk, No.3 is based on a melodic fragment extracted in a permutational manner from a longer phrase that was used in my recent piano pieces; this passage, in turn, is based on another melodic fragment, of even older ancestry (!). In its quasi-pantonal way, the piece inhabits a G natural—C sharp—G natural axis. The fragment – or 'the chant' as I think of it – is shadowed and reinforced by cadential nodes derived from a single overall circle (and two interlocking inner ones) and their geometric/architectural Circular Functions.* The intuitive manipulation of these materials and procedures generates the four essential parameters, and their embellished final form.

* Most of my music employs this harmonic/spatio-temporal methodology, mainly manifested in the large cycle of works of Surrealist origin called *Many Stares through Semi-Nocturnal Zeiss-Blink* begun in 1978 – see the Sonata note above for more info on this cycle. The current piece is module 133 of the cycle, associated with the date 12 May 2024 (the 133rd day of that year).

Always at Dusk, No.3 is dedicated to Christian Mason, great colleague and ex-pupil, who is a true master at expanding momentary experiences and minute acoustic discoveries into magical large-scale compositions.

Pas de Deux for One (1978, rev. 2023)

for solo flute

This is one of the few pieces from my early twenties that I have kept in circulation. Also, probably, the last work in which I employed highly contrasted gestural phraseology, frequent changes of tempi and a whole range of other mid-twentieth-century ‘modernist’ mannerisms.

The work deals with several of my obsessions of that period. I was involved with modern ballet daily; studying performance arts; active as an accompanist at several dance studios in London (including The Place / London Contemporary Dance Company and School); and working with several choreographers as composer and music director.

In the mid-1970s, I was an active member of the London Musicians’ Collective, which shared a building with the London Film Makers Co-Op in Camden Town (at the time, these two organisations were the main hub of avant-garde activity in London in their respective fields). There I discovered the ‘choreographed’ films of Maya Deren (b. 1917, Kyiv—d. 1961, New York), often referred to as the ‘mother’ of American avant-garde filmmaking, whose narrative structures are meticulously organised from seemingly disconnected fragments and sudden, frequent shifts of location. She utilised a wide range of experimental cinematic devices, such as fast, expressive intercutting, slow motion, freeze framing, backwards movement, and varying speeds. But my fascination with her work really started when I realised that all the technical exploratory activity in her films was a means to an end: her work is essentially poetic, and it offers insights into the interaction of human body and psyche while moving continually between subjective and objective experience. The unusual techniques are there only to bring about the intended dream-like quality and to clarify the multi-layered narrative.

I was surprised to discover, many years after composing *Pas de Deux for One*, that Deren had once referred to her best-known film, *A Study in Choreography for Camera* (1945), as “a *pas de deux* for one dancer and one camera”!

I wrote the original version of this piece for myself to perform at a dance and improvised music event during the 1978 Camden Festival. As a flute player, my performances at the time featured heavily the whole gamut of ‘extended techniques’ – often also with electronics. As in the work of Deren, I aimed in *Pas de Deux for One* to use the extra timbral devices to emphasise the dichotomy between the two contrasting materials which are the main building blocks of the composition. The current, expanded version of the work was produced in 2023, inspired by Noemi Gyori’s huge palette of tone colours, her virtuosity, and her acute insights into the work’s theatrical aims, objectives, and potential for interpretative expansion.

Programme notes © 2025 Sinan Carter Savaşkan

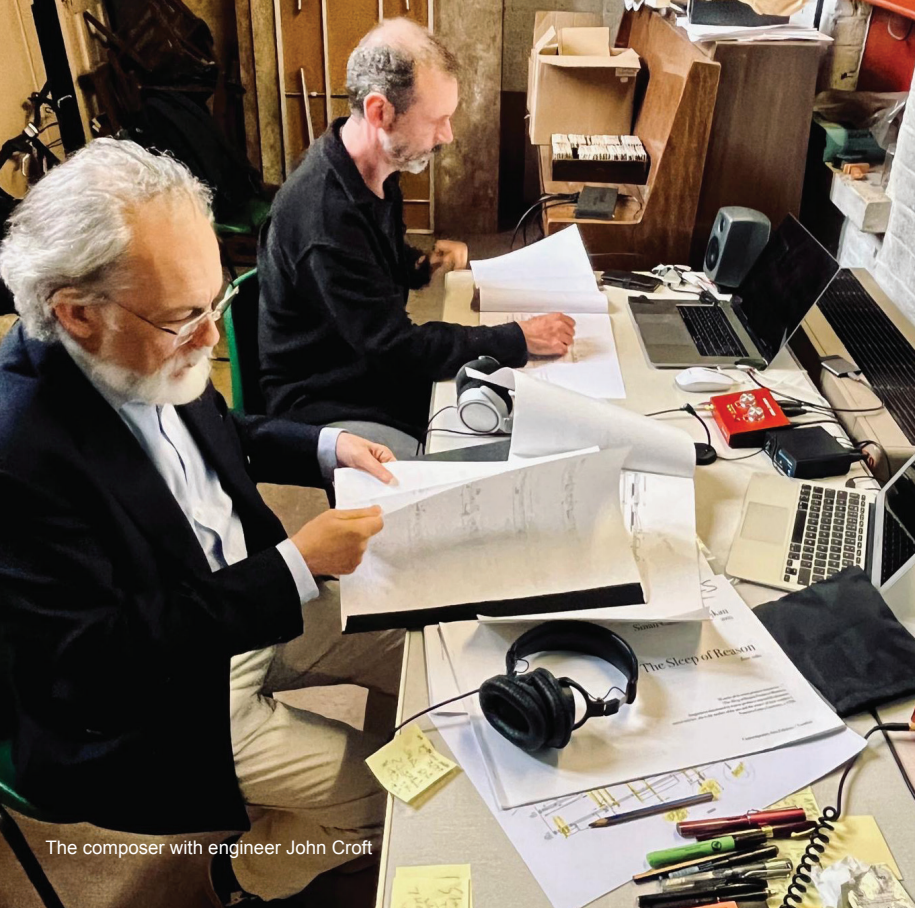
A note on the electronics

The electronic elements of both the Sonata and *Always at Dusk* follow the same technical and stylistic principles: the sampled, coloured noises derive from the actual acoustic instrument which performs the pieces.

A significant moment of the performance is sampled, like a photographic frame, then it is explored, amplified, transposed, granulated, self-harmonised (according to the harmonic scheme of the pieces), etc. etc. For example, the ‘drums’ in *Always at Dusk* are originally the rich, low key clicks of the alto flute (often with a ‘tongue ram’); hissy, distant wind and storm effects are highly detailed recordings of the instrument’s auxiliary sounds in extreme amplification; and so on. An exception is the metallic, deep, bell-like sounds: the origin of those is a long steel ruler that I used at my composing desk while notating the pieces – so, still an organic part of the process of creation.

The ideal, in live performance, is a dynamic interaction between the performer and the electronic part, with the two elements reacting to each other spontaneously. For this recording, samples were recorded in advance in the studio and a fixed electronic track prepared. This original track, which I prepared myself for the rehearsals with Noemi Gyori, was then further polished and balanced in a highly skilled, disciplined and artistic computer editing process which I entrusted to Carl Faia, who is a true wizard!

Sinan C. Savaşkan, 2025



The composer with engineer John Croft

BIOGRAPHIES

Noemi Gyori is a celebrated flautist on modern and Baroque flutes, hailed internationally for her “phenomenal technique and sparkling play of colours” (*Opus Klassiek*), “rich tonal repertoire and enchanting melodic shaping” (*Turun Sanomat*), and “great skill and intensity” (*Flute Journal*). At home in all repertoire and a leading interpreter of contemporary music, she regularly premieres concertos and other works dedicated to her.

As a soloist and chamber musician, Noemi has captivated audiences in over thirty countries, performing with orchestras across the globe. She has appeared with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège, Turku Philharmonic Orchestra, Georgian Philharmonic Orchestra, to name but a few, and in her home country has performed with the Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra and most of Hungary’s symphonic and chamber orchestras. She has also appeared at many notable classical music festivals, collaborated with esteemed ensembles, and co-directed events such as the Ördögkatlan Classical Festival, Arcus Temporum, and her own IKZE Contemporary Music Festival in Budapest (from 2004 to 2009).

Noemi’s artistic excellence has been recognised with numerous awards. She was awarded the European Cultural Prize for Young Artists in 2011, the Career Prize of the New York-based Salon de Virtuosi Foundation in 2012, and she is a two-time recipient of the Performers’ Prize of the Artisjus Music Foundation (2006 and 2009) for her outstanding performances of Hungarian contemporary compositions.

Noemi holds a master’s degree with honours from the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, as well as a postgraduate diploma from the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna and the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München. Her mentors included Henrik Pröhle, Barbara Gisler-Haase, András Adorján, Lisa Beznosiuk and Benedek Csalog. In 2020, she made history as the first flautist to earn a PhD in performance practice from the Royal Academy of Music in London.

Beyond her solo career, Noemi is principal flautist of the Jewish Chamber Orchestra Munich and has performed with the Vienna Philharmonic (Vienna State Opera) and BBC Philharmonic.

As an educator, she has taught flute at the Junior Royal Northern College of Music for well over a decade and at the University of Manchester since 2019. A sought-after adjudicator and masterclass leader, Noemi has shared her expertise at conservatoires and festivals across three continents, while her work with the Tampere Flute Fest, where she joined the Artistic Team in 2024, further underscores her global leadership in the flute community.

Noemi's discography includes six critically acclaimed albums published on the Rubicon, Hungaroton and Genuin labels, with three more releases slated for 2025–26. Her performances have been featured on numerous international networks and radio stations, including the premiere of Christian Mason's *Thaleia Concerto* for flute and piccolo, broadcast by Mezzo/Medici.

A regular feature in international press, Noemi has appeared on the covers of *The Flute View* (USA), *The Flute* (Japan), *Eurowinds* (Germany) and *Gramofon* (Hungary). Playing a 14K gold Miyazawa flute supported by The Solti Foundation and the Philip Loubser Foundation, she balances her thriving career with family life in London, where she resides with her conductor husband, Gergely Madaras, and their two daughters.

In addition to her musical endeavours, Noemi launched the Noemi Collection in 2018 – a series of art objects created in collaboration with leading designers.

Born in 1954, **Sinan Carter Savaşkan** works and lives in London, where he has been active for many years as a composer, lecturer and teacher of composition. His music has been commissioned, performed and broadcast in over thirty countries by some of the foremost performers, including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, John Harle and Myrha Saxophone Quartet, Lontano Ensemble, Orchestra of the S.E.M. Ensemble directed by Petr Kotik, Balanescu Quartet, Smith Quartet, Gemini Ensemble, Tim Brady, Sydney Alpha Ensemble, Trio Basso (Cologne), Ensemble Contemporary α (Tokyo), Contemporary Arts Ensemble (London) with Zsolt Nagy, Cambridge New Music Players, and the pianist Yvar Mikhashoff, as well as several performances of organ and other ceremonial music in Westminster Abbey.

Important early support came from the MusICA series curated by Adrian Jack at the ICA (Institute of Contemporary Arts), which commissioned and premiered the first four works in the 360-module cycle *Many Stares through Semi-Nocturnal Zeiss-Blink* in 1978. In 1990, Savaşkan won the Arts Council of Britain's Dio Fund Award for his saxophone quartet *The Street*. His *Three Dances* for orchestra, Op.31 – three dance interludes from the work-in-progress *Venom*, an opera – were selected by the Society for the Promotion of New Music as featured work for the Manchester Composers' Forum in 1997. His *Symphony No.2 'Age of Analysis'*, commissioned by the BBC Symphony Orchestra's Composers' Forum in 1997 and premiered under Martyn Brabbins, was featured at the UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers, Paris in 2002, leading to broadcasts around the world, and later – during the Covid-19 lockdowns – received more votes than any other symphony in the popular Twitter competition 'World Cup of British & Irish C20/21 Symphonies', only to lose in the final by 49% to 51% to Tippett's *Symphony No.1*.

The world premiere in New York of *Symphony No.3 'La Rosa Enflorece and the English Cadence'* (commissioned and premiered by Petr Kotik and his S.E.M. Orchestra) led to Savaşkan being selected in 2000 as recipient of the Foundation for Contemporary Arts' prestigious Grants to Artists Award – the first British composer to receive this award. More recently, in 2015, he won a BASCA British Composer Award (later renamed the Ivors Classical Awards) in the Large Chamber category for *Many Stares through Semi-Nocturnal Zeiss-Blink – Module 30*.

He has written much ballet and incidental music, as well as music for film. In 2004 he was music director/composer for the University of Cambridge's renowned biannual Greek Play, an original-language production of Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* (*Oedipus Rex*). His score for the feature film *The Invisible Life* (*A Vida Invisível*, dir. Vitor Gonçalves) was highly commended at the 2013 Rome Film Festival and won the prize for Best Original Music in the 2015 CinEuphoria Awards.

Since 1977, Savaşkan has worked on a personal constructivist compositional methodology, whereby what he calls Circular Functions inform the direction and organisation of all aspects of a given work. In brief, the structural parameters of his music (including tonality, harmony, melody, durations, timbre and dynamics) are integrally related to its architecturally conceived formal proportions, which are, in turn, based on the behaviour and properties of sound and its circular characteristics. This method has developed in a parallel, but entirely separate, manner from that of the composers of the French spectral tendency, with which it exhibits a number of overlaps in the use of overtone series, difference/summation tones, and microtonal tunings.

An original feature of Savaşkan's works from the early 1980s onwards has been the coexistence of strict construction with, or its disruption by, seemingly contradictory, extempore elements (for many years he was an improvising musician, and he was also heavily influenced by the English experimental school of composers – including studies, performances and consultations with Cornelius Cardew and John White, and involvement in the London Musicians' Collective).

Savaşkan is currently Composer in Residence for the Octandre Ensemble. A major new work composed for that ensemble will appear on Métier Records later in 2025, funded – like the present release – by an award from the PRS for Music Foundation's Composers' Fund.

His media and stage works are published by Faber Music, London.



Sinan C. Savaşkan



Noemi Gyori

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Engineered, edited and mastered by John Croft (Chiaro Audio)

Electronic music composition (original tracks): Sinan C. Savaşkan

Computer music designer and editor: Carl Faia

Noemi Gyori's instruments: 14K Miyazawa Boston concert flute with Lafin headjoint and CEFlute Invention tuning plug stopper; Muramatsu alto flute

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